

Eastbourne Licensing Committee

Minutes of meeting held in Court Room at Eastbourne Town Hall, Grove Road, BN21 4UG on 29 August 2019 at 6.00 pm

Present:

Councillor Pat Rodohan (Chair)

Councillors Robin Maxted (Deputy-Chair), Colin Belsey, Helen Burton, Sammy Choudhury, Penny di Cara, Jim Murray, Barry Taylor and Candy Vaughan

Officers in attendance:

Danielle Ball (Specialist Advisor Licensing), Michelle Wilkinson (Lawyer (Housing & Regulatory)), Emily Horne (Committee Officer) and Elaine Roberts (Committee Officer).

8 Minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2019

The minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 27 June 2019 were submitted and approved and the Chair was authorised to sign them as an accurate record.

9 Apologies for absence/declaration of substitute members

Apologies for absence were reported from Councillors Diplock and Murdoch. Absence was noted for Councillor Morris.

10 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) by members as required under Section 31 of the Localism Act and of other interests as required by the Code of Conduct.

There were none.

11 Questions by members of the public

There were none.

12 Urgent items of business

There were none.

13 Right to address the meeting/order of business

The Chair reported that an Objector had requested to address the Committee, having raised an objection to the proposed Hackney Carriage Fare increase during the Public Consultation, and would be invited to speak when the Committee considered that item.

14 Hackney Carriage Fares

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Service Delivery regarding the request for a new fare structure as proposed by the Hackney Carriage proprietors.

There was a verbal addition to the report: that the 30th of October had been identified as the optimum date to introduce an increase in the Hackney Fares, should that proposal be finally approved.

Following agreement of the revised fare structure by the Licensing Committee on 11th March 2019, the revised tariff was then passed to the Leader of the Council for final approval prior to publishing a public consultation. A copy of the revised tariff was included at Appendix 1b of the report.

The decision of the Leader, on behalf of the Cabinet, was that if there were any objections then the Licensing Committee should be delegated to consider the same and modify or not the proposed fares.

Members were advised that 1 objection had been raised during the public consultation period regarding the Hackney Carriage Fare increase proposed by the trade. The letter was included at Appendix 4 of the report.

In his representation, the Objector raised concerns regarding the proposed tariff increase and in particular to:

- Transportation of domestic pets being raised 100% from £1 to £2
- Small removals cost rising 33% from £6 to £8

Members raised concerns regarding the increased cost of a 'small removal' from £6 to £8 and the lack of clarity of what a small removal is.

Members were advised that the cost of a small removal is discretionary and to be considered in addition to the metered fee. The Officer agreed to consider clarifying 'small removal' in the proposal which comes to Committee in September.

Concern was also raised by Members at the increased cost for transporting domestic pets, which had risen from £1 to £2. It was felt this could disadvantage passengers taking pets to and from the vets, for example.

Members were advised that the Fare Card sets out what the maximum levels are to ensure drivers do not go over the maximum limit set.

Councillor Belsey proposed a motion to agree the increase in fares; apart from the increase in charges for transporting domestic pets. This was seconded by Councillor Taylor. The motion was lost by 3 votes to 6 against.

The Committee further discussed the options and it was considered that given 84% of the trade had agreed to the proposed increases and that the work to achieve an acceptable fare increase had been ongoing since October 2018, the increase in fares was seen as reasonable after a 10 year period since the fare structure was reviewed.

Councillor Burton proposed a motion to accept the proposal that the Hackney Carriage Fares remain as proposed by the Licensing Committee on 11 March 2019 and shall come into force on 30th October 2019. This was seconded by Councillor Murray.

Resolved: (By 7 votes and 1 abstention)

The meeting ended at 6.45 pm

Councillor Pat Rodohan (Chair)